

CHAPTER 20

Administrative Procedures

Section 26 – National Fire Preparedness Plan

26 National Fire Preparedness Plan

National Preparedness Levels are established by the NMAC at NIFC throughout the calendar year. Preparedness Levels are dictated by burning conditions, fire activity, and resource availability. Resource availability is the Area of most concern. Situations and activities described within the Preparedness Levels consider wildland fires and prescribed fires. At any preparedness level, NMAC may request that proposed new Wildland Fire Use (WFU) or prescribed fire (Rx) applications be curtailed to meet national resource needs for emergency operations.

26.1 Why Preparedness Levels are Established

The purpose of established Preparedness Levels is:

- A. To identify the level of wildland fire activity, severity, and resource commitment nationally.
- B. To identify actions to be taken by NIFC and Geographic Areas to ensure an appropriate level of preparedness/readiness for the existing and potential situation.
- C. To guide and direct Geographic Area Fire Management activities when essential to ensure national preparedness or in response to the National situation.

The NICC Coordinator will monitor the national wildland fire activity and Geographic Area Preparedness Levels and will recommend to the NMAC a National Preparedness Level. Response and support to non-fire incidents requiring a significant commitment of resources may also affect National Preparedness Levels. National Preparedness Levels will be responsive to the Homeland Security Advisory System.

National Preparedness Levels are determined from the ground up and may influence resource allocations within Geographic Areas not experiencing significant activity to ensure sufficient resources are available for the national situation.

26.2 Geographic Area Preparedness Levels

Geographic Area Preparedness Plans should be prepared in accordance with Agency Directives. Copies of Geographic Area Plans should be forwarded to NICC.

26.3 Preparedness Level Descriptions

26.3.1 Preparedness Level 1

Description: Minimal large fire activity nationally. National Response Framework (NRF). Most Geographic Areas have low to moderate fire danger. There is little or no commitment of National Resources.

A. Management Direction/Consideration:
Agency/Geographic Areas will determine appropriate actions.

Responsibility:
Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

26.3.2 Preparedness Level 2

Description: Several Geographic Areas are experiencing high to extreme fire danger. Wildland fire activity is increasing, and support to the NRF and/or large fires are occurring in one (1) or more Geographic Areas. Minimal mobilization of resources from other Geographic Areas is occurring. There is moderate commitment of National Resources with the potential to mobilize additional resources from other Geographic Areas.

A. Management Direction/Consideration:
Agency/Geographic Areas will determine appropriate actions.

Responsibility:
Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

B. Management Direction/Consideration:
Daily morning briefings conducted for the NIFC Directorate.

Responsibility:
NICC Coordinator.

C. Management Direction/Consideration:
Monitor Geographic Area wildland and prescribed fire status, resource commitments, and preparedness levels.

Responsibility:
NICC Coordinator, Geographic Area Coordinators.

26.3.3 Preparedness Level 3

Description: Two (2) or more Geographic Areas are experiencing wildland or prescribed fire activities or support to the NRF requiring a

major commitment of National Resources. Additional resources are being ordered and mobilized through NICC. Type 1 and 2 IMTs are committed in two (2) or more Geographic Areas and crew commitment nationally is at 50%.

A. Management Direction/Consideration:

Agency/Geographic Areas monitor WFU, prescribed fire activities, and suppression requirements to maximize efficient resource utilization for identified priorities.

Responsibility:

Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

B. Management Direction/Consideration:

Ensure agency fire qualified personnel are available for fire assignments.

Responsibility:

Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

C. Management Direction/Consideration:

Daily morning briefings conducted for the NIFC Directorate.

Responsibility:

NICC Coordinator.

D. Management Direction/Consideration:

Coordinate the prepositioning of National Resources, as appropriate.

Responsibility:

NICC Coordinator.

E. Management Direction/Consideration:

Consider requesting Severity Funds to strengthen fire preparedness capability (scarce National Resources).

Responsibility:

NICC Coordinator.

F. Management Direction/Consideration:

Assess resource availability from Canada.

Responsibility:

NMAC.

G. Management Direction/Consideration:
Monitor critical Fire Cache Supply Inventories and provide appropriate direction to Geographic Areas.

Responsibility:
NMAC.

H. Management Direction/Consideration:
Geographic Areas provide NICC with timely intelligence on existing and emerging situations.

Responsibility:
Geographic Area Coordinators.

I. Management Direction/Consideration:
AMD and FS Aviation inspect all Type 1 and Type 2 Helicopters.

Responsibility:
National Aviation Officer, FS, and Director, AMD.

J. Management Direction/Consideration:
Advise the military of the need for a Defense Coordinating Officer (DCO) to be assigned to NIFC.

Responsibility:
NICC Coordinator.

K. Management Direction/Consideration:
Evaluate the need to activate the National Interagency Support Cache Coordinator at NICC.

Responsibility:
NICC Coordinator and National Interagency Support Cache Managers.

26.3.4 Preparedness Level 4

Description: Three (3) or more Geographic Areas are experiencing incidents requiring Type 1 and 2 IMTs. Competition exists for resources between Geographic Areas. Nationally, 60% of Type 1 and 2 IMTs and crews are committed.

A. Management Direction/Consideration:
Establish MAC Group at NIFC and conduct MAC Group Meetings daily.

Responsibility:
NMAC.

B. Management Direction/Consideration:

WFU and prescribed fire application can be continued or be initiated if the proposed action is approved by an agency at the Regional or State Office level. This approval must be based on an assessment of risk, impacts of the proposed actions on Area resources and activities, and include feedback from the GMAC. The GMAC provides information or perspectives to agencies wishing to proceed with or implement a WFU or prescribed fire application. The final decision to implement resides with the implementing agency.

Responsibility:
Agency Administrators and Regional and State Offices.

C. Management Direction/Consideration:

Establish IR Coordinator position at NICC, as appropriate.

Responsibility:
NICC Coordinator.

D. Management Direction/Consideration:

Allocate/preposition National Resources.

Responsibility:
NMAC.

E. Management Direction/Consideration:

Train additional emergency firefighters as may be appropriate.

Responsibility:
Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

F. Management Direction/Consideration:

Coordinate “off-site” training of emergency firefighters with Geographic Areas.

Responsibility:
NMAC Coordinator.

G. Management Direction/Consideration:

Encourage: (1) Assignment of Communications Frequency Managers and Aviation Specialists to all complex multiple

incidents; and (2) Activation of MAC Group as may be appropriate.

Responsibility:

Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

H. Management Direction/Consideration:

Geographic Areas provide NICC with fire priorities and other pertinent information at [0300 and 1700 daily].

Responsibility:

Agency Administrators within Geographic Areas.

I. Management Direction/Consideration:

Implement Military Training Plan. Assemble Training Cadre for training military.

Responsibility:

NMAC Coordinator.

J. Management Direction/Consideration:

AMD and FS Aviation contract, award, and inspect additional CWN Type 1 and Type 2 Helicopters.

Responsibility:

National Aviation Officer, FS

K. Management Direction/Consideration:

Activate the National Interagency Aviation Coordinator position.

Responsibility:

National Agency Aviation Offices – FS, BLM, and AMD.

L. Management Direction/Consideration:

Activate the National Interagency Support Cache Coordinator position at NICC.

Responsibility:

NICC Coordinator.

26.3.5 Preparedness Level 5

Description: Geographic Areas are experiencing major incidents which have the potential to exhaust all agency fire resources. Eighty percent (80%) of Type 1 and Type 2 IMTs and crews are committed, as well as the majority of other National Resources.

- A. Management Direction/Consideration:
Continue with National Preparedness Level 4 activities.

Responsibility:
NMAC Coordinator.

- B. Management Direction/Consideration:
Request Canadian Liaison for the NMAC.

Responsibility:
NMAC Coordinator

- C. Management Direction/Consideration:
Access the need for International assistance.

Responsibility:
NMAC

- D. Management Direction/Consideration:
Add Coordinator position at NICC to coordinate military mobilizations.

Responsibility:
NMAC Coordinator.

- E. Management Direction/Consideration:
WFU and Rx applications can be initiated or continued if the proposed action is approved by an agency at the Regional or State Office level and local resources are available to carry out the application without additional outside resource needs. This approval must be based on an assessment of risk, impacts of the proposed actions on Area resources and activities, and include feedback from the GMAC. The GMAC provides information or perspectives to agencies wishing to proceed with or implement a WFU or Rx application. For WFU or Rx applications to be initiated or continued that requires additional support of resources from outside the local unit or require resource ordering of an IMT or FUMT, a National MAC representative must assess risk and impacts of the proposed action and present to NMAC for review prior to proceeding. The final decision to implement resides with the implementing agency.

Responsibility:
Agency Administrators, Regional and State Office Fire Staff, NIFC Staff, and NMAC.

F. Management Direction/Consideration:
Prepare Geographic Area evaluation/assessment of current and projected fire situation when requested by the NMAC.

Responsibility:
GMACs.

G. Management Direction/Consideration:
When requested by the NMAC, make available and incorporate project equipment into the NFES Fire Cache System.

Responsibility:
GMACs.

26.3.6 Preparedness Level 5 to 4

Description: Competition for resources has significantly decreased. No critical fire weather events are forecasted for the next twenty-four (24) hours, and moderating weather conditions are forecasted for the next three (3) to five (5) days.

26.3.7 Preparedness Level 4 to 3

Description: Significant demobilization is occurring. Crews are being released daily and sent to home units. Fifty percent (50%) of total crew capability is available for new fires. All ground DoD resources have been released. Moderating conditions are forecasted for the next twenty-four (24) hours, and higher humidity and lower temperatures are forecasted for the major fire areas.

26.3.8 Preparedness Level 3 to 2

Description: The majority of large fires are contained. Initial attack resources are again available. Geographic Area Crew availability is at or above the 50% level. There is no competition for resources between Geographic Areas. Large fire areas are expected to receive precipitation, with associated higher humidity and lower temperatures.